

Shareware Solutions II

An Exciting Apple II Journey Into The Future

Volume 3, Issue 6

Late, 1997

From The Publisher's Desktop

I would like to express my most sincere and heartfelt gratitude and appreciation to all of you for your incredible patience and understanding while waiting for this, the better-late-than-never 18th issue of the Shareware Solutions II newsletter. This issue commemorates the end of Volume 3, and we'll soon be embarking on Volume 4 of our exciting Apple II journey into the future.

During the production of the six issues that comprise Volume 3, Shareware Solutions II expanded its base of operations by greatly increasing the number of Apple II software titles that it publishes and distributes. Although that had the positive effect of ensuring that some fantastic and useful software remains available, it also resulted in some untimely delays in producing the newsletter. The recent delays are deplorable, and Shareware Solutions II has every intention of returning to a much more timely production schedule for Volume 4.

Upon receipt of this issue, many of your subscriptions will lapse and you will need to renew in order to receive the next six issues that will be published as Volume 4.

As a means of expressing thanks to all those loyal subscribers who will continue to support the ongoing Apple II efforts of Shareware Solutions II, Publisher Joe Kohn, in association with Alltech Electronics

of Oceanside, California, will be giving away a brand new Apple IIGS Sirius II RAM Card that will be fully populated with 8 Megabytes of RAM! There will be a random drawing held on February 15, 1998 and one very lucky person whose subscription is current on that date will be the winner.

The giveaways don't end there! Shareware Solutions II, in association with Seven Hills Software, is also pleased to announce "The Great Easter Egg Hunt."

Easter Eggs are hidden snippets of code that, when activated by a program's user, will often lead to amusing, unexpected and undocumented results. Seven Hills Software publishes Spectrum, Space Fox, and GraphicWriter III and each one of those programs contains at least one very well hidden Easter Egg that has as yet gone completely undiscovered or unreported. If you can find one or more of the Easter Eggs in these software titles, you will receive a copy of the recently released updated SuperConvert v4 graphics conversion program (or another equivalently priced program) from Seven Hills and a \$25 gift certificate for Shareware Solutions II. Submit your entry by mail or e-mail by April 1, 1998 and if you correctly identify the method to trigger any of the Easter Eggs, you'll be a winner.

A preliminary round of "The

Great Easter Egg Hunt" was conducted online, and Doug Cuff elected to receive a one year subscription extension from Shareware Solutions II and a copy of TransProg III from Seven Hills. Doug correctly identified all nine of the Easter Eggs that are concealed within Spectrum Internet Suite.

You too can activate these Easter Eggs; the next time you're connected to the world wide web with SIS, enter any of the following into SIS's Current URL Display:

about:geoff
about:speccie
about:joe
about:apple2
about:sevenhills
about:foo
about:mozilla
about:fullhistory
about:history

Although Doug found these hidden Easter Eggs with relative ease, the remaining Easter Eggs in Spectrum, Space Fox and GraphicWriter III are very well concealed. But, if you are able to find any of them, you too will receive valuable prizes of your choice from the sponsors of "The Great Easter Egg Hunt."

The fun won't end there, and Volume 4 promises to continue all of the Shareware Solutions II traditions started in the first three volumes, but in a much more timely manner. Don't miss out on any of the fun; please renew your subscription today. 🍏

KansasFest '97

Shareware Solutions II

Volume 3, Issue 6

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B) The next 6 issues/Renewal: \$25 for US/Canada; \$40 elsewhere.

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The Impossible Dream

Earlier this year, Seven Hills Software set up a site on the world wide web to announce the impending release of Spectrum Internet Suite, and in the process of setting up the web pages, Seven Hills inadvertently and unintentionally set the tone for the greatest and most wondrous Apple II event that has ever taken place – KansasFest '97.

Web surfers who visit the Spectrum Internet Suite Home Page are greeted by a three part message that, in many ways, sums up the collective pride of the Apple II programming community and defines the overriding motivation of many of those programmers who continue to produce Apple II and IIGS software. Flashed across three screens, the message that Seven Hills conveys is filled with pride, mixed in with just a little bravado. The message proclaims:

"First, they said it couldn't be done on an Apple IIGS. Then, they said it couldn't be done without TCP/IP. We've proved them wrong."

Apple II programmers have always risen to the occasion when challenged by the mistaken belief that the Apple II just does not have the needed resources or horsepower to support more modern day applications, and several programs were demonstrated at KansasFest '97 by unabashedly proud and feisty programmers who stunned the attendees by providing them with a first look at the next generation of Apple II software; software that many just never expected to see running on an Apple II. And, interestingly enough, at least one of those

programmers traveled more than 10,000 miles to show off what they said couldn't be done on an Apple IIGS.

KansasFest Kickoff

Just as they have every summer since 1989, Apple II users and programmers traveled from around the world to the campus of Avila College in suburban Kansas City to spend five fun filled days and four very long nights celebrating the magic of the Apple II computer.

Although attendance figures had decreased from 100 attendees at KansasFest '96 to only 47 attendees at KansasFest '97, the excitement level far surpassed that of any previous gathering, and many of those 47 attendees reported having the absolutely best weekend that they have ever had!

Kfest '97 was much more intimate than in any previous year, and attendees were able to meet and talk with everyone who was there. And talk they did! Long into the night, the hallways of Avila were abuzz with excitement; there were 1 AM Pizza-Fests and 2 AM "photo shoots." There were laughs galore, as we shared jokes and stories, and there were late night computer diagnostic clinics. There were impromptu new product demonstrations, and many attendees marveled at some Apple II and IIGS prototypes that they had never even heard about before. There was some truly fantastic food to eat at local restaurants, but surely the greatest aspect of Kfest was the camaraderie and friendships that developed during those five glorious days!

True to tradition, the first unofficial Kfest '97 function was

the annual get together at KC Masterpiece, a world famous restaurant located just a few miles from the campus of Avila College. As delicious as a KC Masterpiece meal is, several of us were just as excited by the discovery of a software store located next to the restaurant, and we were just thrilled to see the rack of Apple II 5.25" free-ware and shareware disks that were so prominently displayed near the entrance to the store. That Apple II "sighting" served as an exciting first course to the barbecued ribs, roasted chicken and broiled steak that we so joyously consumed.

After dinner, we made the trek back to Avila College where we got to meet our roommates for the long weekend, got to renew old friendships, and got to meet many of the attendees who traveled as much as halfway around the globe. And, despite the fact that many attendees had plans to get a good nights sleep, the sound of clicking keyboards was heard throughout the Avila dormitory until at least 2 AM.

Day One

The first official KansasFest '97 session was David Kerwood's Keynote Speech. David was recruited by the Kfest coordinating committee to deliver this address due in large part to his job; he is employed by the US Navy as a professional speech-writer. When David is not busy writing speeches, he maintains a massive site on the world wide web that focuses on the history of the US Navy in Newport, Rhode Island. And when he's not at work, David uses his web creation skills to promote and support the Apple II on A2 Web. That large and

comprehensive site which David jokingly calls "The Mother of All Apple II Web Sites" is located at the following URL:

<http://www.syndicomm.com/a2web/>

David is involved as a volunteer with Syndicomm – the organization that manages the Apple II forums on Genie and Delphi – and because of his long time use of modems, the topic of his speech was something that David naturally feels a lot of passion for, namely, using the Apple II computer to telecommunicate.

David did go on to talk about just how wondrous the Apple II online universe is, but he began by discussing recent developments at Genie. In some ways, David's speech was a continuation of the keynote speech delivered at KansasFest '96 by Gary Utter. During that previous keynote address, Gary told us all that Syndicomm was planning to expand its operations from its homebase on Genie onto another online commercial network and possibly, onto the Internet. Since then Syndicomm did indeed open up Apple II areas on the Delphi network during 1996, but David focused on bringing us all up to date on some proposed and perhaps inevitable changes at Genie.

David shocked many of us when he revealed that in August, 1996, the former owners of Genie – General Electric – had given the new owners an ultimatum. At that time, GE gave Genie a one year notice that they must move the entire network from the computer systems that were still owned by GE.

David stated that the ramifica-

tions of that notice would result in major changes to the Genie system and to the way that its users accessed and used it. The most noticeable change, David told us, would be that all of the various offline readers employed by users of the Genie system would break spectacularly when the new software hits. David also informed us that Syndicomm had been instructed to undertake a massive project to transfer all that comprised the Genie Apple II forums, including the library with more than 20,000 programs and the entire messaging system, onto the new computer hardware systems. Apparently, several people involved with Syndicomm had already seen the new system, and David reported that they had jokingly called it "Genie Lite."

He went on to explain Syndicomm's attitude about the proposed changes, and read a letter from Syndicomm founder Dean Esmay. The essence of the letter could best be summed up in the following phrase: "Genie represents the past for the Apple II online community; Delphi represents its future."

David then abruptly switched gears and asked the rhetorical question, "Who are we and why are we here?" He answered his own question to thunderous applause: "We are here because we love the Apple II."

He then asked for a show of hands of those in attendance who owned modems, used them to send e-mail and to surf the web, and as it turned out, 95% of us held our hands high! Due to that overwhelming statistic, David urged us all to become more active as evangelists, heartened us to spread the word to non-modem owners about the

wonders that awaited them at the end of their telephone line, and encouraged us all to teach other Apple II owners how to go online. He concluded, "telecommunications are the ties that bind. We all discovered the magic and we need to share that. The future of the Apple II is online."

A better ending line couldn't have been delivered, as immediately after the keynote speech was over, Geoff Weiss treated everyone in attendance to a live, interactive demonstration of Spectrum Internet Suite (SIS).

Geoff was literally overflowing with pride because of his valuable contributions to Spectrum Internet Suite, the world's first and only IIGS web browser. Exactly one year before, Geoff had attended his first ever Kfest, and it was there that he had met Spectrum author Ewen Wannop and where the seeds for SIS were first sown. What a difference a year makes!

When Geoff first met Ewen, he had been employed for several years as a System Administrator for a Washington, DC area Internet Service Provider, and in the course of his work, he had an opportunity to learn a lot about Unix and about all the various Unix protocols that control how information flows across the Internet. When it came time for Ewen and Geoff to actually start coding SIS, they decided on a natural division of labor based on each of their areas of expertise. Geoff took responsibility for the portions of SIS that interacted directly with the Internet, including the sending and receiving of packets of data, and Ewen was responsible for how SIS displayed the incoming

data after it was received.

For the next two hours, Geoff dazzled and dazzled the attendees with a live demo of Spectrum Internet Suite. Many in attendance hadn't yet seen SIS in action, and to report that most in attendance were incredibly impressed by Geoff's demo would be the understatement of the year! After all, just a short year before, common knowledge dictated that a IIGS just wasn't powerful enough to support a web browser. Fortunately for the rest of us, Geoff and Ewen were able to prove otherwise.

After a lunch break in the Avila cafeteria, attendees had to make a choice between attending Geoff Weiss's Introduction To Unix presentation, or to attend the Publishers' Roundtable session that was moderated by Stan Marks.

For the second year in a row, those who write, edit and publish Apple II newsletters were invited to participate in a panel discussion about their respective publications. A first time Kfest attendee, Stan Marks, was recruited by the Kfest Coordinating Committee to moderate the panel, and because he has no ties to any of the publications, aside from being a subscriber to all of them, he did an excellent job of providing equal coverage to all of the publications.

I of course represented Shareware Solutions II on the panel. Along with me were Max Jones of Juiced.GS, Steve Cavanaugh of The Apple Blossom and HyperQuarterly, and Ryan Sunaga of Genie's Apple II version of GenieLamp. Each of us gave a short five to ten minute

talk about the history of our publications, and then the most amazing thing on earth happened, something that could only happen in the Apple II world! We all ended up trying to promote each other's work. And the audience joined right in, offering business suggestions that could benefit all of us. It quickly became obvious to panelists and audience alike that all of the writers, editors and publishers were good friends who greatly respected each other. By the time the session was over, the panelists all agreed to some well intentioned but vague plans to actually start up an Apple II Marketing Association.

Only in the Apple II world, and only at Kfest, would publications that are competing for the same subscriber base ever agree to such a concept as the pooling of resources. But, as was stated over and over during the session, not a one of us really felt as if we were in competition with each other, and we all agreed that co-operation was what would most benefit the Apple II community at large.

After the first afternoon session ended, attendees had to choose between attending Chris Budewig's session devoted to Apple II emulation or Auri Rahimzadeh's session on programming Apple's hand held Newton device.

Several months before, I had had the opportunity to spend an enjoyable day with David Kerwood when he attended a conference in San Francisco, and it was then that I first suggested to him that he present a Kfest session on the Bernie][The Rescue IIGS emulator for PowerPC-based Macs. Since David had given the first public demo of the Gus IIGS emulator at Kfest '96,

he was a natural choice to follow up that session with a demo of a IIGS emulator that had, unlike Gus, actually been publicly released. He and the Kfest Coordinating Committee agreed.

Since Chris Budewig had already planned to demo many of the other released Apple II emulators, he and David agreed at the last moment to combine their two sessions.

As Chris explained, computer emulation is an artificial environment that works just like the real thing, and the challenge to programmers of emulators is to create simulated hardware using just software. He explained that there are now a number of different Apple II and IIGS emulators available for IBM PCs and PowerPC-based Macintosh computers, and that the emulators allow people to run actual Apple II or IIGS software on those other types of machines just the way they would as if they were using a real Apple II or IIGS. Since Chris and David both had Mac-based PowerBooks, it was the Mac-based emulators that they demoed for us.

And what a demo it was! Imagine seeing your favorite IIGS software running on a IIGS at 20 Mhz! Imagine running a version of AppleWorks Classic 20 times faster than on a stock IIe! If you'd been at Kfest, no imagination would have been necessary, as Chris and David demoed for us those very things!

Coincidentally, many of the Apple II fanatics who attended Kfest brought their own IIGS laptops with them, in the form of a PowerBook with Bernie II The Rescue installed, and the session therefore elicited a lot of

audience participation. Everyone in attendance who saw Bernie II The Rescue in action agreed with the assessments of the panelists and the informed audience that Bernie II The Rescue was the clearcut choice as the most outstanding emulator of them all.

After that session, we all had dinner at the Avila cafeteria and following that, we broke a long standing Kfest tradition and headed off to the first ever evening session – Richard Bennett's talk entitled "The Internet: Are Apple II Users Being Left Behind?"

Marinetti

Richard had informed me of his Marinetti project back in January, 1997, but most people attending Kfest had absolutely no idea that Richard would soon be knocking them on their ear with his unexpected announcement and demo of a freeware TCP/IP stack that would allow, for the first time ever, Apple IIGS owners to connect directly to the Internet using the TCP/IP protocol to establish a SLIP connection.

Without a doubt, Richard's demonstration was Apple II history in the making, and all those who were at KansasFest '97 must surely agree that the Marinetti session was the most exciting one of the entire conference. After all, as Richard's session was just getting started, we all "knew" that TCP/IP "couldn't be done on an Apple IIGS." And, as the session unfolded, it was obvious that Richard was just thrilled to disprove yet another misconception held by many about the Apple II.

Richard started off by offering

an extremely technical explanation of just how the Internet works. He described how the Internet employs four basic layers of protocols, including Applications, Transport, Network and Link. He attempted to demystify those terms by explaining the mechanics of how the Internet sends and receives data: "When a web browser (an application) wants to retrieve a web page, it sends out its request for the information by creating a stream of data that uses a TCP Transport protocol. Then the Network (IP) passes along the packets of data, the Link protocol reads the data and passes it back through the Network and Transport layers again, which eventually returns the data to the web browser application, where it is then rendered and displayed on the computer monitor."

Despite the fact that not all of us were programmers or engineers who could fully understand the technical complexity of the Internet protocols, it soon became apparent that it wasn't at all necessary to fully understand the underlying programming and protocols in order to comprehend or appreciate what Richard really wanted to show us.

It was then that Richard went to the Apple Pull Down menu on the IIGS that he had set up, accessed the Marinetti Control Panel device that he'd pre-installed and pre-configured, and proceeded to establish a SLIP connection to a local Internet Service Provider! A hush fell over the crowd, as more than 40 pairs of eyes opened widely, and the staggering implications of what Richard had just done started to dawn on us!

Until that moment, Apple IIGS

owners who wanted to access the Internet were limited to using a menu driven system such as is available on Delphi or Genie, or by having a Unix dial up Shell Account. But, in this day and age, Unix Shell Accounts are getting harder and harder to find, and Marinetti would allow Apple IIGS owners to access the Internet via a SLIP account. Additionally, Richard told us that in a few months he hoped to update Marinetti so that it would support the even more widely available PPP access route to the Internet.

When an Apple IIGS user connects to the Internet using a Unix Shell Account, the IIGS is simply acting as a “dumb terminal” via VT-100 emulation. The IIGS therefore isn’t really connected directly to the Internet; instead, the IIGS interacts with the Internet Service Providers’ computer system, and it’s the ISP’s computer that is connected directly to the Internet. Furthermore, when connecting to the Internet via a Unix Shell Account, all navigation is accomplished by invoking Unix-based software that resides on the ISP’s computer system.

Marinetti, in addition to providing different means of accessing the Internet, supports the TCP/IP protocol. This means that Apple IIGS computers that use Marinetti will be directly connected to the Internet, and this opens up a wide range of new and exciting Apple IIGS software that could take advantage of the error correcting TCP/IP protocol and allow IIGS owners to use the Internet in much the same way as those who use Macs or PCs with Netscape.

Richard informed us that Mar-

inetti is the tool to unlock the doors to many of the riches found on the Internet, but that it would be up to other Apple II programmers to create the actual “keys to the kingdom” in the form of Apple IIGS software that worked in conjunction with Marinetti.

Richard told us that when Marinetti is released, it would include the Control Panel device itself and a desktop-based Telnet application that would allow IIGS users to log on to remote computers systems over the Internet. He did state, however, that he would be providing developer technical support so that if other programmers had a desire to write Marinetti-aware Apple IIGS software, whether that be ftp or irc software or two player interactive games, Richard would provide technical assistance. But, he stressed that he himself wouldn’t be writing that software, merely helping other programmers to create additional applications.

Richard informed us that even though Spectrum author Ewen Wannop had been unable to attend Kansasfest, he had been informed about Marinetti and had started to make plans to update Spectrum so that it would be Marinetti-aware. Additionally, Geoff Weiss told us that an update to Spectrum Internet Suite wasn’t out of the realm of possibilities.

Although it was after 9 PM by the time that Richard finished his presentation, eager and enthusiastic programmers continued to discuss Marinetti long into the early hours of the morning. In fact, so many people were so excited by the possibilities and implications of Marinetti that impromptu discussion

groups formed in just about every nook and cranny of the Avila dorm, and the last thing on many people’s minds was the annual, but poorly attended, Kfest traditional Bite the Bag competition that followed Richard’s talk.

Day Two

The second day of sessions was to have started with a talk by a local representative from Apple Computer Inc, but at literally the last minute, he informed the Kfest Coordinating Committee that he’d be unable to attend. Apple’s cancellation led to some quick scheduling changes, with the positive result that only one session would be held during each time block that day. That worked out very well, as no one was forced to have to make difficult choices about which session to attend.

Kicking off the second day of sessions was Steve Cavanaugh’s first of two excellent presentations devoted to HyperCard IIGS. Steve, a first time Kfest attendee, publishes The Apple Blossom Newsletter, and just prior to Kfest, he had completed and released the premiere issue of his second Apple II publication – HyperQuarterly – a subscription-based quarterly newsletter-on-disk that focuses exclusively on HyperCard IIGS.

Steve provided a guided tour of HyperCard, and in doing so, showed us how HyperCard can be used even by non-programmers to create just about any type of interactive software anyone could possibly ever want. As he stated so eloquently: “Before lynx, before Netscape, there was HyperCard. It’s a database, a spreadsheet, a graphics viewer, a program launcher, a sound

player, a music composer, and a paint program.” He went on to describe HyperTalk, the built-in HyperCard programming language, by saying: “HyperTalk is a full fledged programming language that lets you do math, graph, manipulate text and navigate in almost plain English.”

Following that session, Max Jones of Juiced.GS gave a hands-on talk that was entitled “GraphicWriter III and AppleWorks GS.” Since Max has been a working journalist for his entire career, his talk could easily have been called, “Desktop Publishing Hints and Tips.” For more than an hour, he shared with us some of the design pitfalls and problems that confront novice desktop publishers, and he offered hints, tips, and suggestions as he answered many of the questions posed to him.

Rather than merely relying on the spoken word, Max used both IIGS desktop publishing programs to illustrate many of his points, and offered advice on some other “must-have” IIGS software including Pointless, TypeSet, and TransProg III. He advised people to make their desktop publishing projects as aesthetically pleasing as possible, while concentrating on the content. He advised that if too many different fonts are used, readers will become distracted and he therefore suggested that desktop publishers use only a few fonts in their creations.

Although Max didn’t go into any details about it, eagle-eyed attendees noticed that he was using a version of GraphicWriter III that was slightly different from the one that Seven Hills currently sells. Apparently, Max had been recruited to test out some improvements to

the program which may eventually, at some point in the future, be incorporated into the next update to GraphicWriter.

After lunch in the Avila cafeteria, we all listened to Ryan Suenaga, the editor of the Apple II version of GenieLamp, as he shared his thoughts and opinions about creating home pages on the world wide web whose intended audience are Apple II owners.

He started out by showing us several sites on the web that relied so heavily on graphic representations to convey the content that they were essentially unviewable to those who use the lynx web browser. At a site maintained by Sony, there was essentially nothing at all that could be seen with lynx. For contrast, he then showed us examples of sites that were filled with information, all of which were viewable via lynx.

Ryan showed us those sites as a lead-in to his discussion on “The Dos and Don’ts of Apple II HTML” and he told us that if web designers followed some basic common-sense guidelines, their sites could be accessed by anyone, no matter which web browser they used. Among some of his suggestions were:

- Do use minimal graphics.
- Do use GIF graphics.
- Do use appropriate <alt> tags.
- Do use Apple II friendly compression and encoding.
- Do check your work with lynx and Spectrum Internet Suite.
- Do be creative with ASCII art.

Among many of his caveats were:

- Don’t rely on excessive use of graphics to get your point

across.

- Don’t use Jpeg graphics or QuickTime movies.
- Don’t forget to make your graphics downloadable.
- Don’t use Apple II unfriendly compression and encoding.
- Don’t assume that if your home pages look fine in Netscape that they’ll look fine on an Apple II.
- Don’t forget to give proper descriptions to <alt> tags.

During the last scheduled session of the day, Tony Diaz once again picked up his Dremel tool and illustrated to all just what it means to be a real “hardware hacker.”

Five years ago, Tony constructed the world’s first and possibly only IIGS portable computer and for the past two years at Kfest, he has been showing others how they too can perform similar magical feats. Using an empty Dynamac portable case that originally housed a Macintosh luggable computer, Tony proceeded to stuff everything imaginable into that case to show us that it is theoretically possible to have a power user’s IIGS system, complete with an accelerator card and a hard drive, inside a portable case.

Tony’s demo was really only a simulation, as it might take weeks or even months of solder slinging to construct an actual working IIGS portable. But, true to the theme of KansasFest ’97, Tony illustrated before our very eyes that nothing, absolutely nothing, is beyond the realm of possibility when it comes to the Apple II computer.

The actual title of Tony’s session was “Ile Times II,” and this title was an oblique reference to the legendary Apple II prototype

computer that Tony was eager to exhibit next.

Long a subject of speculation and rumors, the Apple IIX project was Apple's first attempted foray into extending the Apple II beyond its original 8-bit architecture. The aborted Apple IIX project dated from the mid-1980s, and it was the IIX that brought Apple co-founder Steve Wozniak back to the company after his near fatal airplane crash earlier in the decade.

In November, 1996, Tony Diaz and I were fortunate enough to be invited to a very special and exclusive garage sale that was held by a long time Apple employee, and it was there that we discovered the semi-working Apple IIX prototype that was the "Ile Times II" system that Tony unveiled at Kfest.

As the IIX was started up, it proclaimed at the top of the screen that it was a "G. G. Prototype." This was, after all, to be Apple's bridge to the future so it was only natural for the IIX to be code named after the Golden Gate Bridge.

After explaining that the IIX included all of the features and video modes found on a standard Apple IIe, Tony then removed the top of the case so that the motherboard could be seen by all. It was then that people saw a completely redesigned motherboard that contained a new type of slot; a slot which was designed for a Motorola 68000 based co-processor.

The Motorola 68000 microprocessor is, of course, the same one that was found in the Macintosh models from that earlier era, but the 68000 in the IIX wasn't there, as most would as-

sume, to run Macintosh software. Instead, it was designed to run an Apple II version of the Unix Operating System!

During the mid-1980s, Unix had not quite made the inroads it has in recent years, so the IIX could be seen as either coming ten years too late or ten years too early. In any case, the Apple IIX project never produced more than a handful of prototypes, and Kfest attendees were just thrilled to actually see one.

Tony Diaz then produced and demoed several more fabled Apple II hardware products that had never been brought to market, including the TurboRez and Apple's own Ethernet card.

But then, all too soon, Tony's allotted time was up, and it was time to go to the Avila cafeteria for the traditional Kfest Roast.

The Roast

The man who had the dubious honor of being roasted by his peers was none other than the man of the hour, the hero of Kfest '97, Richard Bennett.

The panel of roasters included your humble Publisher, who acted as the Master of Ceremonies, and my distinguished colleagues Max Jones of Juiced.GS, Geoff Weiss of Spectrum Internet Suite fame, and Ryan Suenaga of GenieLamp.

As I stood before the assembled masses, I quietly whispered an apology in Richard's ear for anything I might say or do during the next hour, and then I launched into a good natured verbal assault that turned Richard's face a deep red color.

I started off by quoting the bio-

graphical portion of Richard's web page that described him as having been abducted by aliens who taught him to be a circus contortionist, and it quickly went downhill from there. I joked about how Richard had been named by the Australian government as a cultural liaison to the US, and how disappointed that government was when Richard released his infamous Kangi Fixer IIGS Init file. Kangi Fixer works in conjunction with Seven Hills' Kangaroo utility, and causes the cute animated kangaroo that hops across the IIGS splash screen to explode.

Much of the humor during Richard's Roast was related to the fact that Richard has taken a very strong public anti-piracy stance and he has been known to get into arguments and written jousting matches with copyright infringers. In the most infamous of those public fights, Richard was ridiculed and called a "head banging moron," so of course, all of us made sure to use that phrase over and over again during the Roast.

Although we all gave Richard a very hard time, and cracked joke after joke at his expense, it should have been obvious to everyone that we were all good friends and that those of us roasting Richard were all in awe of his superb and creative programming abilities. I had such a good time making up impromptu one liners that I actually volunteered to act as emcee of the roast at KansasFest '98. I just hope that Richard had half as good a time as I, and the other roasters, had.

Day Three

The final day of Kfest was devoted to product demos in the

morning, a vendor's fair in the afternoon, and a delicious steak dinner at a local restaurant in the evening.

First up was Steve Cavanaugh, who gave a guided tour of the premiere issue of HyperQuarterly. He showed off all of the HyperCard stacks that were included as part of this first issue, and those who had not yet seen HyperQuarterly were quite impressed with the quality and creativity exhibited by Steve and the other members of the HyperQuarterly team.

Next up was Mike Hackett, who demoed an amazing IIGS program which had been created by one of Mike's fellow Canadian programmers. The program was a IIGS desktop-based utility program that displayed breathtaking and beautiful scanned color photographs from PhotoCDs. Mike himself has been working for the past few years on FaceLift, a project that has the potential to make many more IIGS software titles compatible with the Second Sight video card, and the reason he showed the PhotoCD reader is because Mike has been in discussions with the author to incorporate the PhotoCD reader into the, as yet, unreleased FaceLift project.

The following timeslot was supposed to be devoted to products from Shareware Solutions II, but I had other plans up my sleeve. Rather than having the publisher himself promote Shareware Solutions II, I'd previously arranged to have the publisher of Juiced.GS promote his "competition." But what had started out as a joke turned out to be a heartfelt testimonial to Shareware Solutions II. Thank you, Max.

Since the theme of KansasFest '97 could best be summed up as "doing what can't be done on an Apple II," the first product I demoed was a IIGS program that, quite frankly, performed a valuable function that just had not been possible to accomplish before.

Seeking as much dramatic effect as possible, I offered no introduction and proceeded to format a disk for the MS-DOS operating system, right from the IIGS Finder's Desktop. I then copied some ProDOS-based text files to that MS-DOS disk, and then proceeded to display the contents of those files from a GS/OS based window!

I pointed out that the MS-DOS FST that is supplied on System 6.0.1 is capable of reading files from an MS-DOS disk, but that there was no way on earth that it could possibly write to MS-DOS disks, much less format disks for MS-DOS.

What I demoed had previously been, most thought, impossible, but that didn't deter Australian shareware programmer Peter Watson. Several years before, Peter had released MS-DOS Utilities, a IIGS shareware utility that has the ability to read and write to MS-DOS disks. But, just like MS-DOS itself, Peter's first release was command line driven.

Under development for two years, Peter had sent me a pre-release copy of his newly updated version of MS-DOS Utilities, renamed MUG! The updated MUG! utility has been turned into a convenient New Desk Accessory whose various powerful options can all be unleashed by just a few clicks on a mouse button. No more convo-

luted MS-DOS-like commands are needed to activate the various options, making MUG! an easy-to-use and very elegant utility for those IIGS owners who also use IBM PCs. Armed with MUG!, it's now easier than ever to copy files back and forth between MS-DOS and GS/OS.

After that came a demo of an upcoming multiplayer IIGS arcade game from the German IIGS software team NinjaForce. Kaboom! is a clone of the popular Bomberman game that is available for IBM PC clones. Bomberman is considered by many to be the ultimate party game, as it can be played by up to four players simultaneously, and Kaboom! will also allow that many players. The goal of Kaboom! is relatively simple: just bomb your way through huge battlefields consisting of soft and solid blocks, collect as many Power-Ups as you can to increase your firepower, and get the other players before they get you!

To demo Kaboom!, I recruited two members of the audience who had never before seen the game but who were familiar with Bomberman. And, for the next 10 minutes, Geoff Weiss and Dave Miller battled each other on a 21" monitor as the assembled masses cheered them on.

NinjaForce expects to complete Kaboom! by March or April, 1998, and upon its completion, the game will be available exclusively from Shareware Solutions II. Although no firm price has yet been set, it is anticipated that it should cost no more than \$25.

The final demo of the day saw Mike Westerfield of the Byte-

Works offering a sneak peek at GSoft, a IIGS specific version of the BASIC programming language. It should be noted that GSoft is still an incompleated work in progress, and Mike just wasn't able to estimate when it would eventually be completed and released.

Mike said that "BASIC is the computer language that anyone can learn" and to illustrate that point, he asked for a show of hands of those who had ever used Applesoft BASIC to create a program, and virtually everyone in the room raised their hands. He told us that GSoft will be much more sophisticated than Applesoft BASIC, and that it will be able to be used for IIGS Toolbox programming.

Programming languages do not generally get people overly excited, but Mike then dropped a bombshell that knocked the socks off of even the non-programmers in the audience. He showed us a 15 line GSoft program that he'd written at 3 AM the previous night; that tiny GSoft program was actually a small telecommunications program that worked in conjunction with Marinetti to establish a TCP/IP connection to the Delphi online network.

And with that exciting information, the training and demo sessions for KansasFest '97 drew to a close. The rest of the day was turned over to those who had Apple II products to sell. Many at the Vendor Fair offered special discounted Kfest prices, and from the looks of things, most vendors sold out of just about everything they had brought with them.

People started to leave after the Vendor Fair, with many others

leaving after the fabulous steak dinner at Jess & Jim's. The dorms weren't quite as bustling on that last night, but for those who remained, there were lots of discussions about what we had seen and heard over the past few days. But, most of all, that final evening was spent partaking in social activities, solidifying new friendships, and joking around about how nothing is impossible when you use an Apple II computer.

On Sunday morning, as a handful of people sat around outside the dorm indulging in some last minute Apple II chatter while waiting for transportation to the airport, one last pleasant Kfest surprise awaited those of us who were still on campus at Avila College.

Jeff Neuer, a long time former employee of Tom Weishaar's Resource-Central organization, arrived with an armful of CD-ROMs that he produced under Tom Weishaar's auspices. The "A2-Central on CD-ROM" that he offered us contained the entire 10 year run of Resource-Central's flagship product – the A2-Central newsletter (also known during its long production run as Resource-Central, Open-Apple and ICON). The CD-ROM contains the full text of each issue of that highly regarded and beloved newsletter. It also contains a complete compilation of six years' worth of A2-Central-On-Disk, a 30 Megabyte collection of shareware and freeware that was included on all hard drives sold by Resource-Central, and a plethora of Apple II reference materials such as Apple's Technical Notes and Filetype Notes.

For those of you who are interested in purchasing the A2-

Central on CD-ROM, Jeff's mail order price for the disk is \$70, and it can be purchased by sending a check or money order to him at:

Jeff Neuer
30640 Spring Valley Road
Paola, KS 66071

Ten Years After

Soon after KansasFest '97 concluded, the Kfest Coordinating Committee announced that plans were already well underway to hold the 10th annual KansasFest at Avila College on July 22-26, 1998.

With all the excitement generated by KansasFest '97, next summer's gathering promises to be the Apple II event of the year, if not the decade! Although it is still much too early for the Kfest Coordinating Committee to accept reservations for next summer's celebration, it's not too early for you to start making your plans now. If you've never attended an Apple II conference before, please think about attending Kfest '98. After all, it's not every vacation that offers you the opportunity to witness an impossible dream unfolding before your very eyes.

Virtual KansasFest

If you have access to the world wide web, there are several KansasFest '97 sites that will show you many of the highlights, in both words and pictures, at the following URLs:

<http://moscow2.pld.com/kfest97>

<http://www.syndicomm.com/a2web/kfest.html>

<http://www.primenet.com/~adams/kfest.html> 🍏

Genie, Delphi And The Apple II

Ballad For A Friend

For most of the past decade, the undisputed center of the Apple II online universe has been the Genie network. It has been there, in the two Syndicomm managed Apple II forums (A2 and A2Pro), where Apple II users and programmers have congregated for camaraderie, shared technical discoveries, engaged in problem solving dialogues, discussed the latest hardware and software developments, uploaded more than 20,000 programs, and it is on Genie where almost all Apple II companies have traditionally offered technical support for their products.

However, since mid-January, 1996, events far beyond the scope of the Apple II and far beyond the responsibility of Syndicomm management have unfolded and have had serious consequences that have resulted in the newly revitalized Delphi online network now laying claim as the new center of the Apple II online universe.

The slow migration of Apple II users from Genie to Delphi started when the Genie online network was sold by General Electric in January, 1996 to Yovelle, and the new owners promptly instituted a steep rate increase. Although the rate increase infuriated some, it was the method in which it was announced that drove the first nail into the Genie coffin; Genie subscribers were given no more than two or three days' notice.

At that time, a significant number of Genie subscribers simply cancelled their accounts as a reaction to the rate increase. But, the number of those Apple II users who remained on Genie

was so great that the day-to-day operations were largely unaffected, and both A2 and A2Pro remained extremely active and continued to flourish.

It was at KansasFest '96 that Gary Utter, one of the principles of Syndicomm, delivered the keynote speech offering the public a first glimpse of what new online developments we might expect to happen in the future. At the time, Gary pointed out how important Genie's A2 RoundTable has been in fostering the growth of a well connected and friendly Apple II community, but he was extremely concerned that we have "put all our eggs in one basket" and that steps must be taken to preserve our community in the event that Genie might fail us in the future.

During his keynote speech, Gary outlined two possible areas where the Apple II community should be looking to find a new home. He suggested that we needed to find a new online network on which to meet, and he suggested that we branch out onto the Internet. In retrospect, it now appears as if Gary's remarks served as a blueprint for Syndicomm and for all Apple II modem owners. After all, we have found a new home on both an online network and on the Internet. That new home is, unquestionably, the Syndicomm managed A2 and A2Pro forums on Delphi.

Delphi is one of the oldest of the online networks, but in the past, it never had all that much to offer to owners of Apple II computers. That changed in mid-1996 when the Delphi network was sold by Rupert Murdoch and purchased by Bill Loudon, one of the founders of the origi-

nal Genie online network.

Bill Loudon had a vision for Genie that entailed making it into an affordable to use network; he's now implemented that dream system on Delphi, and Apple II users worldwide are the beneficiaries! Due to the many new policies that have been implemented at Delphi under Bill Loudon's leadership, Delphi's Apple II forums are flourishing and have become the great new melting pot for Apple II users worldwide.

In October, 1996, Syndicomm opened up the A2 and A2Pro forums on Delphi, and those forums quickly attracted many of the same Syndicomm volunteers who worked so hard to make Genie's A2 and A2Pro forums the center of the Apple II online universe. A slow migration from Genie to Delphi started taking place. But, it was not until September, 1997 that A2 and A2Pro experienced an explosive growth. Several factors were responsible for that growth, including massive uncertainty about Genie's future, Ewen Wannop's Crock O' Gold offline reader, lower costs to access Delphi, and the institution of free access to A2 and A2Pro from the world wide web!

Tangled Up In Blue

Soon after KansasFest '97, a vague announcement appeared on Genie, posted by Genie's owners, that indicated that all of the forums on Genie would be moved to the world wide web. The notice went on to state that on September 1, 1997, wholesale changes would be made to the Genie operating software that would, among other things, essentially wipe out all vestiges of the old Genie, and after the

changes, all 20,000 files in the old Genie library would be gone. The notice also implied that Genie subscribers would no longer be able to dial up Genie using the GEIS network access system that had been in place for years, and as a result, all of the various offline readers and message handlers would cease to operate.

September 1st came and went, and despite the fact that not a single one of the proposed changes came about, many Apple II users were getting disgusted by Yovelle's obvious incompetence, and they started to bail out. And it's been truly sad to watch as fewer and fewer Apple II users participate in the recently merged A2 and A2Pro forums.

The exodus from Genie reached its height at just about the same time that Spectrum author Ewen Wannop was putting the finishing touches on Crock O' Gold (COG) v1.2, and as soon as that Spectrum-based freeware offline reader for Delphi was released, usage of Delphi's A2 and A2Pro forums experienced meteoric growth. Ewen has since released several more COG updates, and with each new release, more and more Apple II users have been participating on Delphi.

As Genie usage continues to decline, many Apple II modem owners have come to adopt a phrase that they believe accurately describes the situation: "Genie represents the Apple II's past, and Delphi represents the Apple II's future."

Knockin' On Heaven's Door

Delphi has available three different pricing options which are

based on the method a subscriber uses to gain entry into the system. The most expensive option, which really isn't that terribly expensive at all, involves dialing up Delphi directly or via SprintNet. An incredibly affordable option is available to those who already have an account with an Internet Service Provider and who therefore already have the ability to Telnet into Delphi. Lastly, the Apple II forums are accessible on the world wide web for no cost whatsoever! Let's examine each of the options.

Webside Access

Each Delphi forum consists of a number of different areas, including a message base where subscribers can ask and answer questions, a download library that contains a growing number of freeware and shareware software titles, and chat rooms where people from around the world can meet and converse in real time via the keyboard.

Delphi has recently made nearly 100 different forums available via the world wide web for free. Be aware, however, that only certain portions of each forum are available for no charge via the web. Those who access Delphi forums with a web browser have full access to the message base, partial access to the chat rooms (depending on which web browser is used) and no access at all to the download libraries.

According to Syndicomm's Gary Utter, "Delphi itself, although technically a very old service, is being rebuilt from the ground up on a day-to-day basis," and because free web access is so new, it too is undergoing changes. As an example, when free web access was first announced, a "se-

cure web browser" such as Netscape or Internet Explorer was required to sign up and to gain access to Delphi's A2 Forum. Since then, those who use lynx v2.7 can access Delphi's A2.

Because Delphi is available only to subscribers, those who want to access Delphi via the world wide web must first fill out and submit a short electronic questionnaire that establishes their identity, and only then are they issued a password to access the system.

All along, Netscape and Explorer users have had no problems filling out the form and getting the necessary access password, but it hasn't been that easy for lynx users, as lynx doesn't provide the same levels of security as do those other browsers available for the Mac and PC.

Fortunately, Syndicomm realizes that there's a problem for Apple II owners who use only lynx, and has therefore agreed to assist Shareware Solutions II subscribers who have access only to lynx. According to Dean Esmay of Syndicomm, "anyone who can't sign up for an account directly can drop me a note at *esmay@delphi.com* or Tony Ward at *tonyw1@delphi.com* and we'll get you signed up with no problem. The only thing we ask is that people write to us only if they are lynx v2.7 users and find that they cannot sign up for an account on their own. It's no problem for us but we don't want to be deluged with requests from people who could do it on their own. Anyway, feel free to tell Shareware Solutions II subscribers that all they need to do is e-mail either Tony or me and provide us with the following information:

- Your first and last name.
- A nickname by which you'd like to be known online.
- Your current mailing address.
- Your home zip code.
- Your current valid e-mail address.
- What you'd like for a member name (if it's already taken we'll have to pick one for you, but we'll do our best to make it close).
- A password: what you'd like to use for a password.
- Your date of birth.

All of the above is mandatory and must be filled out in full or we won't be able to process the application. The only optional information is the nickname.

Neither Tony nor I will save your password or any other information once we've sent you your account and password info, so be sure not to lose whatever we send you. Once you e-mail one of us (please don't mail both of us), we should get back to you within a few days verifying your account and letting you know your member name."

For general information about Delphi's webside access, point your web browser at the following URL:

<http://www.delphi.com>

Although you can use the above URL to access the Apple II forums, there are several others that you may find more convenient to use. The following URL will transport you directly to the A2 message base:

<http://forums.delphi.com/m/main.asp?sigdir=apple2>

The following URL will transport you directly to the A2 Chat Room:

<http://forums.delphi.com/chat/forumchat.asp?sigdir=apple2>

The following URL will transport you directly to an area that can be thought of as "The Best of Delphi's A2." You'll find Apple II related articles, Apple II announcements, links to other Apple II sites, and information about Syndicomm's Apple II staff of volunteers:

<http://www.delphi.com/apple2/>

Telnet Access

If you already have an account with an Internet Service Provider that provides you with the ability to Telnet to remote computers on the Internet, you may want to consider a full featured "Delphi Premium Account" which will give you complete and total access to everything that is available on Delphi.

For only \$6.95 per month, or \$34.97 per year if paid in advance, you can have complete and unlimited access not only to A2's message base, chat rooms, and software library but to anything and everything that exists anywhere on Delphi.

Additionally, you'll get an e-mail address on delphi.com, 10 megabytes of storage space, and four hours per month of multiplayer game play.

Unlimited Internet Access

For those of you who don't already have an Internet Service Provider, Delphi offers unlimited access to their system by nationwide dial-up access via SprintNet for \$19.95 per month, or \$16.95 per month if paid one full year in advance. SprintNet is a digital telephone network which has local telephone num-

bers throughout the US in more than 200 cities and towns, so that for most people, there are no long distance charges at all to access Delphi.

The Unlimited Internet Access Account provides access to everything that the Telnet Access method does, and then some; it allows you to use Delphi as your local Internet Service Provider.

And In The End

In this day and age, it's quite refreshing to know that a commercial online service actually wants the business of Apple II users and will go out of its way to accommodate us and our special needs. It's also quite amazing, when you think about it, that Delphi now provides free access to their system via the world wide web.

Although it is difficult for many of us to accept the fact that Genie is no longer the center of the Apple II online universe, what made Genie so great for a decade were the people who took part and contributed to A2, and many of those same people can now be found on Delphi. Also, for the most part, all of the companies that provided online technical support on Genie can now be found on Delphi. So, all of the friendships that were made on Genie can be continued on Delphi, and Apple II users worldwide can continue to share technical discoveries and engage in problem solving dialogues in our new Delphi home. And hopefully, Delphi will remain the center of the Apple II online universe well into the next millennium.

Sign Up Information

To register for Delphi via the world wide web, point your web

browser at the following URL:

<http://www.delphi.com> or

<http://www.syndicom.com/a2web/a2signup.html>

To register for Delphi via a toll-free number, have your modem dial 1-800-695-4002. At the username prompt, just enter JOINDELPHI and at the pass-

word prompt, just enter NEWPLANS.

To speak to a Delphi representative, call:

617-441-4801

And just remember, if you own Spectrum, Ewen Wannop's free-ware Crock O' Gold add-on will make using Delphi easier than

you could have ever imagined. For more information about COG v2.1, please see Page 17.

Once you are online to Delphi, don't forget to visit the Shareware Solutions II topic on A2. You can most easily leave a message for Shareware Solutions II by simply typing a response to Message #442. 🍏

Modem Madness

Modem Starter Disk

Despite the fact that the prices for modems have dropped dramatically in the past few years, and the costs to access online services and the Internet have become much more affordable, the aggregate costs of going online still prevents many Apple II owners from getting connected electronically with their peers.

To help alleviate the cost factor, Steve Cavanaugh of the Apple Blossom newsletter distributes a low cost "Apple II Modem Starter Disk" that includes just about everything you need to get online and to use your Apple II for downloading software.

Included on the disk are two different telecommunications programs: Agate and CommSystem. Agate is shareware and CommSystem is freeware. Although both programs perform adequately and are relatively simple to understand and use, neither support any of the high powered "bells and whistles" that commercial software products like ProTERM and Spectrum provide. However, if finances have prevented you from purchasing a full featured modem program, these two pro-

grams can provide you with some of the basic features that ProTERM and Spectrum provide, and can be used until you can eventually afford to purchase a more powerful and user friendly commercial telecommunications program.

Also included on the disk are all of the standard Apple II free-ware utility programs which you will need to process and extract downloaded Apple II files from the compressed format from which they are stored online.

Steve Cavanaugh makes the Apple II Modem Starter Disk available in three different configurations, so when you place your order, you must specify which Apple II model of computer you own, and what size disk (3.5" or 5.25") you prefer. To order the Modem Starter Disk, send \$3 to:

Steve Cavanaugh
PO Box 120434
Boston, MA 02112-0434

Virtual Storefronts

During the past year, a number of previously unknown vendors of Apple II equipment have set up shop on the world wide web. Several of these dealers of new

and used Apple II equipment have catalogs online, which is a great boon to those who like to comparison shop. If you are looking for new or used computer equipment, contact one or more of these new vendors, as well as companies like Alltech, Shreve Systems and The ARC.

- B&R Computer Services has been in business since 1981, and they carry a large variety of used Apple II software. The web site for B&R Computer Services can be found at the following URL:

<http://members.aol.com/rrbp/Home.html>

If you do not have access to the world wide web, you can also get a copy of B&R's printed software catalog by sending a self addressed stamped envelope to:

B&R Computer Services
PO Box 7195
San Diego CA 92167

- MC Price Breakers specializes in Apple II hardware, and they carry new cables, fans, disk drives and controllers, hard drives, RAM cards, mice, switch-boxes, and they also have a rotating stock of many types of Apple II hardware products that have been refurbished. The web

site for MC Price Breakers can be found at the following URL:

<http://www.mcpb.com/>

If you do not have access to the world wide web, you can get a printed catalog of Apple II hardware available from MC Price Breakers by contacting them through more traditional means at:

MC Price Breakers
14415 SE Mill Plain Blvd
Suite 105B-219
Vancouver, WA 98684

360-837-3042
360-837-2057 (FAX)

- Wayne's Computer currently has more than 1,000 different Apple II software titles for sale, in addition to the various complete computer systems they sell. The web site for Wayne's Computer can be found at the following URL:

<http://www.waynes.com/Business/WaynesComputer/index.html-ssi>

If you do not have access to the world wide web, you can get a printed catalog of Apple II hardware and software available from Wayne's Computer by visiting their store in Jordan, New York, or by contacting them through more traditional means at:

Wayne's Computer
17 South Main Street
Jordan, New York 13080

315-689-7899

- Creative Solutions carries new and used Apple II hardware, including serial cards, parallel cards, disk drives and controllers and extended mem-

ory cards. They also perform repairs of Apple II, Laser and Franklin computer systems. The web site for Creative Solutions can be found at the following URL:

<http://members.aol.com/CreatSltn>

You can also contact Creative Solutions by telephone at:

513-429-5759

Let's Chat

As we go to press, plans are being finalized between Shareware Solutions II and Syndicom that will result in a dual system weekly online chat that will be hosted and sponsored by Shareware Solutions II. These proposed weekly chats will allow members on both Genie and Delphi to participate simultaneously in real time!

Earlier in the year, in conjunction with the release of Spectrum Internet Suite, Seven Hills hosted an online question and answer session that was "broadcast" to both Delphi and Genie simultaneously, and that initial linking of the two Apple II online strongholds was so successful, so widely attended and so much fun that Shareware Solutions II wants to conduct similar sessions that will link Apple II users on those two networks on a weekly basis.

To prepare for the proposed upcoming series of chats, Shareware Solutions II hosted an online chat on the Genie network on December 8, 1997, and it was during that initial chat that Spectrum author Ewen Wannop announced to the world that Crock O' Gold v2.0 had been completed and would be re-

leased the following day.

Plans are currently being made to conduct the online chats on Tuesday nights, but the exact time is still subject to some further negotiation. It is anticipated, barring any unforeseen technical problems, that the first regularly scheduled dual system chat will occur in late January, 1998.

Although it is anticipated that these chats will be informal in nature and will generally be freewheeling and unstructured, it's quite possible that some sessions will be devoted to product introductions, interviews, and to single-themed question and answer sessions.

Online chats, for those of you who may not be familiar with them, are similar to telephone conference calls, but instead of talking into a telephone, participants take part by typing messages on their keyboards. A second or less after any message is typed and transmitted, it will appear on the screen of all other chat participants, no matter where they are located. And, in the case of the upcoming Shareware Solutions II chats, it won't matter whether participants are logged on to Delphi or Genie.

When the scheduling for these chats is finalized, members of the Apple II areas on both Delphi and Genie will be informed of the date and time by a publicly posted message on each system's message board.

So, if you've ever wanted to talk with the publisher of Shareware Solutions II, or to be in instant communication with Apple II users from around the globe, you are cordially invited to attend the Tuesday evening chats. 🍏

Shareware Solutions IIe/IIf/IIGs

Nibble Almanac

In the early days of Apple II computing, long before disk drives were affordable, many of the first generation of Apple II users actually relied on computer magazines for all of their software needs.

In the late 1970s and early 1980s, there were several Apple II oriented publications that generally devoted page after page to listings of Applesoft program code, and readers would often spend days typing in that code in order to have any software to run.

Much of the early software typed in from magazine listings was geared towards programmers and hackers, and as the years passed, only one of those magazines – Nibble – survived and flourished. As time passed, the programs listed in Nibble became much more sophisticated and although Nibble remained primarily a programmer's technical journal, much of the software was of general interest and included games, utilities, and database programs.

Dozens of those programs were created by Rudy Guy, a programmer who served as one of Nibble's Contributing Editors for virtually the entire time that Nibble was produced. Long an active supporter of the Apple II, Rudy Guy has recently set up a home page on the Internet's world wide web, and many of Rudy's Nibble programs are available for downloading from his site at the following URL:

[http://members.aol.com/
ljsilicon/apple.html](http://members.aol.com/ljsilicon/apple.html)

In addition to making his software available on the world

wide web, Rudy has also granted permission to Shareware Solutions II to make available a library disk containing his software, and the Nibble Almanac disk contains more than a dozen of his Applesoft-based programs. The centerpiece is Nibble Almanac, a wonderfully creative program that displays daily, monthly and yearly facts and trivia, making it a valuable aid when creating customized birthday cards or certificates for friends and family. The information contained within the Almanac's yearly database includes such notable events as top news stories, the names of best selling books, sports highlights, and Academy Award winners. The information contained within the Almanac's monthly database includes notable and historical events that occurred on each day of the month. The information contained within the Almanac's daily database includes the birthdays of famous people.

The Nibble Almanac covers the years from 1948 to 1988, but there is also an editor included that will allow you to customize or expand on the information that the program displays. Also included is the original Nibble article which provides a lot of programming information for those who do want to customize the program, or for those who want to learn how Rudy programmed the Almanac.

The Nibble Almanac, along with a dozen other utilities, productivity software, programming tools and games is available from the Shareware Solutions II library, on a 3.5" disk only, for \$5. All of the software will run on an Enhanced IIe with 128k, a IIf, IIf+ or a IIGS; a 3.5" disk drive is required.

Best Of GRAPE

The Gospel Resource And Program Exchange (GRAPE) was an organization that brought together a group of people who had the common desire of wanting to promote and share their religious faith via the Apple II computer. In existence from 1980 to 1985, GRAPE produced a series of Apple II public domain disks that contained religious and biblical programs that were geared towards children.

Prior to the demise of GRAPE, seven of those 5.25" disks were combined onto a single 3.5" disk as "The Best Of GRAPE" collection, and Shareware Solutions II is pleased to add that to the Shareware Solutions II library, where it is available for \$5.

The Best Of GRAPE collection provides, in some ways, a Sunday School class on your Apple II computer. Lots of games and quizzes, complete with graphics and sound, test your youngsters' knowledge of the Old and New Testament. Many biblical stories that teach and inspire children are included, as are a variety of biblical databases, one of which includes 26,000 different religious blessings. Additionally, there are hymns and slide shows that will thrill youngsters, games that will interest them, and stories that will teach them religious doctrines.

The Best Of GRAPE collection will work on any Apple II with a 3.5" disk drive connected. The programs can all be launched from a very easy to use custom menu program, making this disk a "must have" for parents who would like to use their Apple II computer as an adjunct to their children's religious upbringing and education. 🍏

Shareware Solutions IIGS

Marinetti Pack

Just a few short weeks after KansasFest '97 concluded, Richard Bennett made the Marinetti Control Panel Device available via the world wide web at the following URL:

<http://www.zip.com.au/~kashum/marinetti/>

Within days, technical documentation and a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) file were also made available, and soon after that, 3rd party software that worked with Marinetti started to be released.

Although the initial release of Marinetti is considered to be "beta software" that only supports the SLIP protocol, what has been created so far gives us a glimpse of just how far the IIGS has recently progressed in the Internet arena. In coming months, an updated version of Marinetti will be released that supports the more widely implemented PPP access protocol, and when that happens, the sky will no longer be the limit for accessing the Internet with an Apple IIGS.

In the meanwhile, Richard Bennett and all those programmers who have created software that works with Marinetti have granted permission to Shareware Solutions II to make a collection of Marinetti software available.

The Marinetti collection contains the Marinetti Control Panel itself, a Telnet application, documentation, articles about TCP/IP, the Marinetti Developer's Kit with sample source code, the Marinetti FAQ, and every publicly available program that works with Marin-

etti, including Geoff Weiss's Finger, Ping, and Whois client applications, along with Andrew Roughan's uncompleted Usenet newsreader.

Ewen Wannop has also been busy; he has created the TopCat XCMD for Spectrum that will let you Telnet directly from Spectrum, and Crock O' Gold v2 that will let you access Delphi via TCP/IP. Included with COG v2 are quite a few user submitted scripts that expand its abilities ever further. As an example, there are scripts and information provided that will show you that it's even possible to use Marinetti and COG from a Unix Shell Account.

Everything related to Marinetti that has been released so far is included in the Marinetti Pack, which is available from the Shareware Solutions II library for \$5. (Note: COG v2 has grown so much in size that it will no longer fit on a single 3.5" disk. For that reason, it is included in the Marinetti Pack as a self-extracting archive; just double-click on it to expand it to your hard drive.)

GNO/ME

For many years, before easy-to-use web browsers made the Internet readily accessible to tens of millions of computer novices, those who wanted to access the Internet had to have at least some basic knowledge of the Unix Operating System.

Currently, the vast majority of those many millions who access the Internet via several easy-to-use graphical web browsers are completely insulated from the Unix operating system. However, Apple II owners who access the Internet via a dial-up

shell account must still have some basic knowledge of Unix, and the more knowledge they have, the more easily they can tap into the incredible capabilities and sheer computing power that Unix has to offer to owners of Apple II computers.

The Unix operating system was developed at AT&T's Bell Laboratories in the early 1970s, and 25 years later, Unix has evolved to such a sophisticated level that it is now the operating system of choice found on many of the world's most powerful computer systems, including supercomputers, mainframes, and workstations.

Unix is a general purpose and powerful multitasking operating system that can run on many different types of computer systems. Due in large part to its multiuser capabilities and the wide variety of Unix compatible applications that have been developed over the past quarter century, Unix is the underlying operating system upon which the Internet runs.

Unix provides a command-line interface that can be more than just a little daunting to use at first, but after the novice Unix user learns how to use a handful of basic Unix commands, learns how to run a few useful Unix programs, and learns how to manipulate files, much of the power that Unix affords will be at his command.

Unix provides a very powerful and versatile computing environment to those using high powered computer workstations, and thanks to Jawaid Bazar's Procyon Enterprises, much of that power is now available to IIGS users via the GNO Multitasking Environment.

GNO/ME is a Unix-like shell for the Apple IIGS that can be used by Unix novices to help learn more about Unix, or it can be used by programmers already familiar with Unix to create sophisticated IIGS software.

GNO/ME was initially released back in early 1992 as a commercial software product that cost \$80, but in August, 1997, it was reclassified as freeware!

During the past five years, GNO/ME has gained a small but passionate cadre of adherents and evangelists, many of whom have created freeware add-on programs for use under GNO/ME. Those programmers who use GNO/ME as a development environment love it, but despite that fact, GNO/ME never really seemed to catch on with mainstream end users, so sales of GNO/ME were always less than stellar.

The last great hope that GNO/ME would ever become the best seller it deserves to be was dashed at KansasFest '97, when Richard Bennett announced the impending release of Marinetti. That freeware TCP/IP stack immediately sounded the death knell for Derek Taubert's long awaited and greatly delayed implementation of TCP/IP for the IIGS. Under development for many years, Derek's GS/TCP would have required GNO/ME. As soon as Jawaid Bazyar learned of the existence of Marinetti, he reclassified GNO/ME as freeware.

With its new freeware status, GNO/ME is expected to be used as a multitasking programming environment for many years to come.

To use GNO/ME, a IIGS equip-

ped with a hard disk drive and 4 Megabytes of RAM are required.

Included with the GNO/ME v2.04 package are nearly 40 utilities that have been tailored specifically for the GNO/ME environment, along with the C and assembly source code for these programs. GNO/ME also comes with a large library of Unix sub-routines, to make porting Unix software to run on the IIGS easier than ever. The powerful libraries include curses and termcap flexible screen manipulation for any terminal type, and all of the C library routines that your IIGS C compiler forgot about!

Ongoing technical support for GNO/ME can be found on the Usenet's comp.sys.apple2.gno newsgroup. For those who would like to download GNO/ME directly from the Internet, you can do so from the following URL:

*ftp://ftp.hypermall.com/
pub/gno*

Also be aware that GNO/ME enthusiast Devin Reade has a site on the world wide web devoted to GNO/ME at the following URL:

http://trenco.myrias.com/~gno

Additionally, you can access a site on the world wide web that includes links that will let you download dozens of GNO/ME utilities that have been developed by avid GNO/ME users and programmers. The URL for that site is:

*http://www.servtech.com/
public/phoenix/computers/
gno/complete.shtml*

Lastly, Jawaid Bazyar has authorized Shareware Solutions II

to make GNO/ME available through its library, and a four disk set is now available for \$10. Three of those disks contain all of the files that comprise GNO/ME v2.04, with the fourth disk containing the GNO/ME program manual, a GNO/ME reference guide and the GNO/ME Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) file.

FreeCell / Turkey Shoot

Jeremy Hack, a IIGS programmer from British Columbia, Canada has recently released a freeware card game that is one of the most addictive, challenging and fun games ever released for the Apple IIGS.

Inspired by a game with the same name that is included as part of the Windows '95 Operating System, Jeremy's IIGS implementation of FreeCell has clearly earned the distinction of being "The Best IIGS Freeware Game Of 1997!"

FreeCell is yet another variation on the game of Solitaire. In it a standard deck with 52 cards is dealt out, face side up, into eight columns. The goal of the game is to move all of the cards into the four home cells that are located at the top right part of the screen. Each of the home cells is reserved for one suit of cards, and all of the cards must be moved into the home cells in ascending order. To accomplish this requires both forethought and the use of strategy.

In addition to the home cells, there are also four free cells located at the top left part of the screen; those cells can be used as temporary holding cells for cards that you want to move but are unable to place directly into the home cells.

Any card from the bottom of any of the eight columns can be moved to a free cell, to a home cell, or to the bottom of any other column provided that they are placed in the new column in descending order and in alternate colors.

FreeCell is very easy to learn how to play. However, winning a game of FreeCell is quite another matter. According to the author of the program, each and every game of FreeCell can theoretically be won, and that's the major reason that it is such an addictive game. One of the pull-down menus offers an option to replay any game that you have just played and lost, and because each game can be won, you may find yourself playing the same game, over and over again, trying to outsmart your computer.

Jeremy has added a number of options to the game that help to make it so enjoyable. As an example, FreeCell keeps track of how many games you've played, how many games you have won, and it even displays the percentage of games you have won. There are also sound effects included, an option to change the color of the game screen, and an automatic completion sequence that springs into action when you have what will be a surefire winner.

When you first start to play FreeCell, it may take dozens of games before you fully understand how important it is to follow a set strategy and to think a few moves in advance. But once you've mastered the fine art of playing FreeCell, there's a lot to love about the game. Even if you don't especially enjoy playing card games on your computer, FreeCell may very well change

your opinion about playing the game of Solitaire.

The second game on this disk is Nathan Mates's Turkey Shoot GS, and it was appropriately released on Thanksgiving Day, 1997. As its name implies, Turkey Shoot is a fast action shoot 'em up arcade game.

The game scenario consists of turkeys of various sizes flying across your computer screen, and armed with your trusty mouse-driven shotgun, your goal is to blast everything that moves. There are large turkeys and little turkeys; there are even amusing turkeys that rotate while flying.

Although the turkeys depicted in Turkey Shoot GS resemble the birds that are usually eaten on Thanksgiving, the birds in Turkey Shoot are nothing like the poultry that was savored by the Puritans. Instead, the turkeys that inhabit Turkey Shoot GS are software pirates who are sapping the lifeblood away from the Apple II development community. In the words of the author, "You're in charge of a nice area of Apple II users, when a group of idiotic turkeys who know nothing better than to be jerks and pirates decide to invade. Not good. So, you pull out your trusty shotgun and show the turkeys who's boss. However, they refuse to listen to reality or the facts, and keep swarming, keep pirating. How long can you survive?"

When you shoot a turkey, it drops the pirated disks that it has been carrying, and you must in turn shoot these disks or your health will decline. As Nathan states in the documentation, "...ammo can be refreshed by the occasional ammo items dropped

from a dead turkey; health goes up by one point per pirated disk you recapture from the pirates, or 25 points with the special health bonus. You do have one special weapon – the Account Nuker – that kills all turkeys on screen, as their internet accounts have been shut down. However, they'll soon find another and be back with a vengeance. Use the spacebar to fire off the account nuker."

Turkey Shoot is a fun to play arcade game with a timely message. Due to the fact that there are no graphic depictions of violence displayed in the game, Turkey Shoot can be enjoyed by even the youngest member of your family. But, if your youngster isn't yet coordinated enough to hit the flying turkeys, there is an undocumented Easter Egg that will make it possible to play Turkey Shoot forever. To activate the Invincible Mode, you must press three keys on the keyboard simultaneously after the game has started; those are the Shift key, the Control key, and the _ key (this last key is located on the top row of your keyboard, to the right of the 0 key).

FreeCell and Turkey Shoot GS are available from the Shareware Solutions II library, on one 3.5" disk, for \$5.

HyperNotes

HyperCard can be used to display information in various innovative and creative formats, and teacher Carmen Anderson has enlisted the aid of HyperCard to help her students gain a greater understanding of literature.

She has created a series of HyperCard-based HyperNotes

stacks that contain extensive literary analysis of novels in much the same manner as do Cliff Notes. They differ from Cliff Notes by providing a colorful interface, background music, and search features that will make it a joy for your students to use.

The HyperNotes disk contains extensive literary analyses for three 20th century classics: J D Salinger's "The Catcher in the Rye," F Scott Fitzgerald's "The Great Gatsby," and Ursula K LeGuin's "The Left Hand of Darkness."

The HyperNotes disk is available from the Shareware Solutions II library for \$5.

Utility City GS

This disk contains a collection of recently released IIGS utili-

ties. Included are Brutal Deluxe's Third View, a graphics viewer for the Second Sight card, as well as their bug-fixed version of Apple's TextEdit Tool34. That update prevents the IIGS from crashing if a GS/OS document contains more than 1,023 different styles. In conjunction with that, Geoff Weiss updated Spectrum Internet Suite to support the bug-fixed toolset, and his SIS files are also included.

You'll also find on this disk Peter Watson's MUG! New Desk Accessory that will allow you to write data to MS-DOS disks, Nathan Mates's latest GUPP v1.0.6 patch program that fixes problems with System 6.0.1, Richard Bennett's Hierarchic Control Panel that can be used by any program from Seven Hills Software that uses hierarchical menus, and Joe Kohn's

12 AppleWorks GS monthly calendars for 1988.

There are also four recently updated utilities by Eric Shepherd. MenuWiper is a Finder extension that causes the Finder's menu bar to slide down the screen, erasing it, as the Finder exits. KeyNotifier is a Control Panel device that provides several features related to keyboards and is particularly useful for those with Apple Extended Keyboards. SmartRestart is a Finder extension that makes shutting down, restarting, and quitting the Finder easier than ever. Lastly, Tsukue is a Permanent Initialization File that launches desktop applications without reverting to the text screen while loading.

The Utility City GS disk is available from the Shareware Solutions II library for \$5. 🍏

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